

# COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



## NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

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### **DAVIS AND NORTON AGAIN INTRODUCE** **D.C. OMNIBUS AUTHORIZATION ACT**

*Act Includes Important Provisions Sought by District Leaders*

**Washington, D.C.** – House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA) and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) introduced the 2005 District of Columbia Omnibus Authorization Act, which includes several important reforms to the District of Columbia government.

This is the second year in a row Davis and Norton have introduced an omnibus authorization bill for the District to serve as vehicle for enacting legislation sought by the District. This year's bill, which is H.R. 3508, includes vital provisions in areas such as budget flexibility, public charter school board reform, and permanent authorization of the chief financial officer

"Once again, Congresswoman Norton and I are creating a way for important legislation to receive approval without forcing the District to rely on the appropriations process for assistance on matters that properly belong to congressional authorizers," Davis said. "This is a better process for the city."

"Congressman Davis and I have institutionalized a new vehicle that is already bringing breakthrough changes to the District. By far, the most important section this year is budget autonomy from the annual federal supplemental process – allowing the city to spend its own money mid-year without coming to Congress," Norton said. "This groundbreaking provision paves the way for the Davis-Norton D.C. Budget Autonomy Act we hope to pass this session to take the District the rest of the way and virtually free the city from the yearly appropriations process."

The following is a list of provisions that would be enacted as part of the Norton/Davis bill:

- 1) A law authorizing the District to spend up to 6 percent of unappropriated local funds in the event of unforeseen circumstances during the 2006-08 fiscal years, without coming back to Congress mid-year during the supplemental process.
- 2) A law allowing the District to tap into its emergency and contingency reserve funds, provided D.C. reimburses those funds.
- 3) An amendment to the District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995 to remove the Department of Education from the process of selecting members of the D.C. Public Charter School Board.
- 4) A revision of the pay cap for nonjudicial court employees to enable the courts to effectively implement a performance management system. This would put the nonjudicial personnel of the D.C. Courts on par with the nonjudicial employees of the federal courts in the District.
- 5) Authority for the D.C. Courts to conduct business outside of the District in case of emergency.
- 6) A permanent authorization for the District's Chief Financial Officer, as well as personnel authority and procurement authority for the CFO. The bill also requires that all legislation passed by the D.C. Council be accompanied by a fiscal impact statement.

Norton and Davis introduced the bill just before Congress recessed Friday, and will make it a priority for passage when Congress returns in September.

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